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ABSTRACT

Each year a study is conducted at Prince George's Community College (PGCC) to update data on student outcomes in accordance with guidelines issued by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Data for the 1993 report were drawn from assessment processes at the classroom, departmental, and institutional levels and are intended to inform the Board of Trustees and larger PGCC community about the achievements of students enrolled in credit classes at PGCC. Results of the study included the following: (1) the proportion of students who pass credit classes has increased since 1986, with 77% passing in fiscal year 1992; (2) based on MHEC analyses of enrollment and degree files for the state, one-third of fall 1988 PGCC entrants had transferred or graduated after four years, yielding an institutional transfer rate of 28% and a graduation rate of almost 11%; (3) two-thirds of the students graduating in 1991-92 were employed in full-time jobs when surveyed during spring 1993, with another 20% working part-time; (4) licensure examination pass rates for PGCC graduates in 1992 ranged from 93% for respiratory therapist graduates, 90% for nursing, 81% for radiography, and 67% for medical records; (5) in graduates' self-assessments of their PGCC experience, enjoyment of learning, self-confidence, and clarification of goals received the highest ratings; and (6) in 1992-93 student evaluations of 235 teaching faculty, 23% of the teachers received average scores of below 4.0 on a scale of 5. Tables and a selected bibliography of PGCC institutional research studies are included. (MAB)

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Student Outcomes

Annual Summary Report to the Board of Trustees

PRINCE GEORGE'S
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Report BT94-2
August 1993

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PRINCE GEORGE'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Office of Institutional Research and Analysis

STUDENT OUTCOMES ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT
Board of Trustees Report BT94-2
August 1993

Introduction

Since its founding in 1958, Prince George's Community College has monitored the achievements of its students and it continues to do so today. Faculty evaluate student accomplishments in the classroom, laboratory, clinical site, and athletic field. Instructional departments and divisions monitor their courses and programs for effectiveness. The College's Office of Institutional Research and Analysis completes several studies each year examining student achievement, with the results shared with top administration and the College's governing board.

This report summarizes the findings of several ongoing assessment processes. The report format accords with guidelines issued by the Maryland Higher Education Commission. It is intended to inform the Board of Trustees and the larger College community about the achievements of students enrolled in credit classes at PGCC. The report is testimony to the College's commitment to an assessment program that reflects the campus mission, provides public accountability, leads to institutional improvement, and enhances student learning.

Student Retention and Graduation

In recent years, about 55 percent of the students enrolled in credit classes at PGCC have stated their intention to earn an Associate's degree from the College. The remaining students have shorter-term goals, such as preparing for early transfer to a senior institution, improving job skills, or exploring educational or career options. Efforts to assess student achievement must include measures in addition to simple calculations of graduation rates. In this section, several measures of student academic progress are reported.

Course pass rates. Student performance in individual courses constitutes a fundamental learning outcome. Assessment, reflected in the final course grade, is the responsibility of the faculty member teaching the course. Successful course completion is a prerequisite for progress in a curriculum, and a useful indicator in itself. Examination of student outcomes at the course level is especially appropriate at community colleges, where as many as half the students enrolled in credit classes may have no intention of earning an Associate's degree. Course pass rates,

representing the percentage of initial enrollees receiving passing grades, provide a ready means of assessing student course success.

Seventy-seven percent of students enrolling in credit classes in Fall 1992 passed, an all-time high. Pass rates over the 1977-86 period had been stable, at 71 or 72 percent each fall. The percent passing increased to 73 percent in 1987 and 1988, and jumped to 75 percent in 1989. It went up again in 1990 to 76 percent, where it remained in 1991, before increasing to 77 percent last fall. Thus the proportion of students passing has been increasing steadily since 1986.

Course pass rates have varied by subject matter. Despite their challenging content, nursing and allied health courses have consistently had the College's highest pass rates. Students have also had relatively high pass rates in physical education courses. Students have had much more difficulty in science and mathematics (see Table 1). Historically, courses requiring mathematics have been the most difficult for PGCC students.

Fall Course Pass Rates By Division

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Health Technology	89%	87%	91%	91%	92%
Physical/Health Education	87	88	87	90	86
Humanities	81	81	83	83	83
Business Management	77	78	81	82	83
Computer/Engineering Tech	73	75	75	80	80
Social Sciences	74	75	74	76	78
English Studies	72	71	73	71	75
Science and Mathematics	59	67	67	65	69

Table 1

Using variables available on the student information system, the research office has examined course pass rates for different student groups. Black males under 21 years of age attending college for the first time have always registered lower pass rates than other student groups (see Table 2). Over the past five years, the course pass rate of this group has declined from 61 to 54 percent. First-time white males under 21 passed 66 percent of their courses in Fall 1992, their lowest rate in five years.

Student Subgroups with Low Fall Course Pass Rates

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
First-time black males under 21	61%	57%	57%	56%	54%
Continuing black males under 21	61	63	66	65	65
First-time white males under 21	68	70	68	67	66
First-time black females under 21	62	64	67	65	69
First-time black males 21-25	61	59	61	70	69
Continuing black males 21-25	66	63	69	70	69
Collegewide-all students	**73%**	**75%**	**76%**	**76%**	**77%**

Table 2

Grade point averages. Nearly three-fourths of the students attending PGCC each fall have cumulative grade point averages of 2.0 or above. In Fall 1992, four percent of the students taking credit classes had zero G.P.A.s, having failed or withdrawn from all credit-bearing courses they had attempted at PGCC. Six percent had enrolled solely in developmental courses or had audited all credit courses they had enrolled in at PGCC (see Table 3). The G.P.A. distribution has been relatively stable.

Cumulative Grade Point Averages, Fall 1988-92
Percentage Distribution

Grade Point Average	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
0.00	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%
0.01 - 0.99	3	3	3	3	3
1.00 - 1.99	15	14	14	13	14
2.00 - 2.99	35	35	36	36	37
3.00 - 3.74	24	25	25	25	25
3.75 - 4.00	11	11	11	12	11
No credits attempted	7	7	7	7	6
Total students (100%)	**13,489**	**13,404**	**13,123**	**13,376**	**13,346**

Table 3

In general, the more hours a student has attempted, the higher the cumulative grade point average (see Table 4). Poorer students are unlikely to persist in the long run, and may in fact be dismissed by the College.

Mean Cumulative Grade Point Averages, Fall 1988-92 by Total Credits Attempted

Total Credit Hours Attempted	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
1 - 5	2.36	2.35	2.34	2.48	2.45
6 - 14	2.29	2.33	2.37	2.38	2.35
15 - 29	2.48	2.50	2.55	2.57	2.57
30 - 44	2.63	2.64	2.64	2.68	2.70
45 +	2.78	2.78	2.80	2.80	2.78
Overall	**2.47**	**2.49**	**2.52**	**2.53**	**2.54**

Table 4

Completion rates. Successful completion of study at community colleges is traditionally defined as either earning a certificate or Associate's degree or transferring to a four-year institution for further study. Analyses of enrollment and degree files by staff at the Maryland Higher Education Commission provide one perspective on the achievement of these traditional goals by Maryland community college students. These analyses report the number and percentage of first-time, full-time students graduating or transferring to a Maryland senior college or university four years after entering the community college. Students beginning study on a part-time basis, a majority at PGCC and most community colleges, are not included in the MHEC analyses. Transfer rates are underestimated since students who transfer during a spring or summer term and do not attend a senior institution in a fall semester are missed, as are students who transfer to institutions outside of Maryland.

A third of the Fall 1988 full-time PGCC entrants had graduated or transferred after four years. Nearly six percent had both graduated from PGCC and transferred to a four-year school. Twenty-two percent had transferred without earning an award from PGCC, yielding an overall transfer rate of about 28 percent. Five percent had graduated from PGCC but not transferred. The overall graduation rate was less than 11 percent.

Commission staff have run this analysis of the status of students four years after their entry as full-time students for each fall cohort since 1980. Since 1984, a clear trend has emerged at PGCC. The graduation rate has declined steadily, while the percentage of students transferring without earning an award from PGCC has increased (see Figure 1).

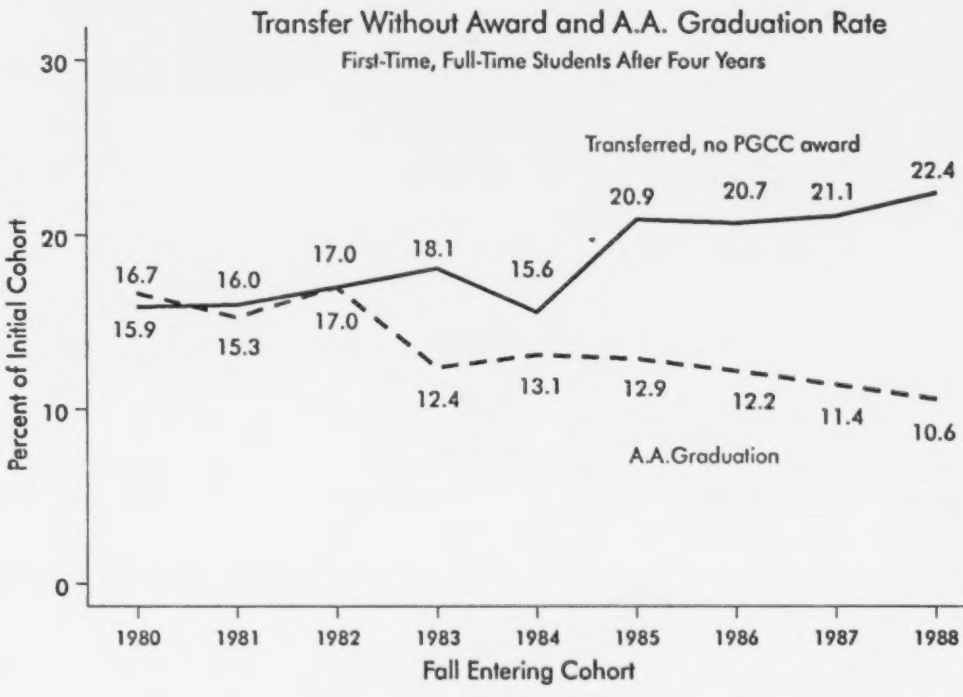

Figure 1

The Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act (Public Law 101-542), as amended by the Higher Education Technical Amendments of 1991 (Public Law 102-26), required institutions of higher education to disclose information about completion rates to current and prospective students beginning July 1, 1993. To be counted as a completion, a student must have graduated or transferred to "a higher level program for which the prior program provided substantial preparation" within 150 percent of the "normal" time to completion. This was interpreted by the U.S. Department of Education to mean three years for Associate degree programs and 18 months for certificate programs.

To assist community colleges with compliance with this law, Maryland Higher Education Commission staff calculated completion rates using state reporting system files and a method similar to that employed earlier to generate the "four years after" cohort studies. Commission staff were guided in the design of their Student Right-to-Know analysis by draft regulations published in the Federal Register on July 10, 1992, and by a draft Graduation Rates Survey form prepared by the National Center for Education Statistics. Most, though not all, community colleges in Maryland used the MHEC analysis to meet their disclosure requirement. The Commission published their completion rate results for all community colleges in the state, permitting comparisons across institutions based on a common method. Of course, MHEC reporting systems do not capture transfer to out-of-state or independent colleges and universities, so to the extent transfer to such institutions varies among community colleges the completion rate comparisons are compromised.

Student Right-to-Know Completion Rates
All Degree-seeking Students
Average of 1986-1989 Cohorts

	Men	Women	Total
African American	11%	13%	12%
	(732)	(1,049)	(1,781)
Asian American	28%	36%	32%
	(110)	(116)	(226)
Hispanic American	25%	20%	22%
	(53)	(56)	(109)
Native American	0%	7%	5%
	(7)	(14)	(21)
White American	30%	42%	36%
	(945)	(1,025)	(1,970)
Nonresident Alien	7%	17%	11%
	(41)	(24)	(65)
Total	**22%**	**27%**	**25%**
	(1,888)	**(2,284)**	**(4,172)**

Table 5

Colleges that award athletically-related aid, such as PGCC, are required to report the average completion rate for the four most recent cohorts, categorized by race and sex (see Table 5). The average completion rate for all students over the four cohorts was 25 percent. That is, a quarter of the degree-seeking, full-time students entering PGCC in the fall terms of 1986 through 1989 had graduated or transferred

within three years. Completion rates varied by race and gender. White students achieved an average completion rate of 36 percent. African Americans had a completion rate one-third that of whites. The average completion rate of women was five percentage points higher than that of men.

Student Right-to-Know Completion Rates

First-time Full-time Degree-seeking Entrants in Fall 1989 Graduating from Initial Community College or Transferring to 4-Year Institution

Community College	"Congressional" Completion Rate
Frederick	42.4%
Charles	40.6
Allegany	40.1
Catonsville	36.7
Hagerstown	36.2
Howard	35.5
Anne Arundel	35.1
Chesapeake	33.4
Garrett	32.8
Wor-Wic	32.5
Harford	32.3
Dundalk	29.6
Cecil	29.3
Montgomery-Ger.	28.2
Essex	27.7
Montgomery-Rock.	27.5
Prince George's	25.9
Baltimore City	23.2
Montgomery-Tak. Pk.	22.6

Table 6

How do PGCC's completion rates compare to other community colleges in Maryland? According to the 1989 cohort data released by the Commission, only two campuses had completion rates lower than PGCC: Baltimore City Community College and the Takoma Park campus of Montgomery College (see Table 6).

Update on Fall 1990 entrants. To gain a richer understanding of the academic performance of PGCC students, the research office has instituted a series of longitudinal studies following the progress of students entering the College in the fall semesters of 1990, 1991, and 1992. Examining the status, as of the end of Spring 1992, of the 2,643 students who entered PGCC in Fall 1990 provides insight into student achievement two years after entry.

More than three-fifths of the students entering in Fall 1990 were not enrolled at PGCC two years later in Spring 1992. Most of the attrition occurred after the first semester, with only 61 percent returning for classes in Spring 1991 (see Table 7). Of course, students may sit out a term or two and return at a later date. Research office studies have found that two-fifths of the students who attend more than one semester at PGCC

Fall 1990 Entrants
Attendance by Term

Term	Students Attending Number	Percent
Fall 1990	2,643	100%
Spring 1991	1,614	61%
Summer I 1991	267	10%
Summer II 1991	160	6%
Fall 1991	1,175	44%
Spring 1992	968	37%

Table 7

interrupt their studies at least once. The only way to separate "stop outs" from "drop outs" is to extend the study period so as to capture the re-enrollment of the "stop outs." The research office intends to follow each cohort for at least six years to accommodate the varying patterns of student attendance. Another complexity in analyzing retention using institutional databases is that the absence of a student from a term enrollment file at PGCC does not mean the student has ceased study. A "drop out" may have successfully transferred to another institution. The newly implemented MHEC Transfer Student System (TSS) promises to provide unit-record information about student transfer within Maryland that will assist institutions with their retention analyses. As of August 1993, TSS data from Maryland public four-year colleges and universities had been submitted to MHEC but the Commission had yet to release any files to community colleges.

Two years after entry, how much progress had the 2,643 Fall 1990 entrants made toward a PGCC degree? Eleven students had earned an Associate's degree as of the end of Spring 1992 (see Table 8). Another 420 students, or 16 percent of the initial cohort, had achieved sophomore status of at least 30 credits earned. A total of 572 students (22 percent) had not earned a single credit at PGCC.

What accounts for the low credit accumulation after two years? Only 29 percent of the 2,643 Fall 1990 entrants attended all four major terms; nearly a third (832 students) attended in Fall 1990 only. But even those attending all four terms had relatively modest cumulative credits earned, with a majority earning fewer than

Fall 1990 Entrants
Cumulative Credits Earned After Two Years

Total Credit Hours Earned	Total Cohort	Students Attending All 4 Major Terms	Full-time All 4 Major Terms
0	572	16	0
1-5	521	22	4
6-11	458	54	10
12-17	298	100	7
18-23	211	110	11
24-29	152	90	13
30-44	264	222	69
45-59	143	137	98
60+	13	13	10
A.A. Graduates	11	11	9
Total Students	**2,643**	**775**	**231**

Table 8

30 credits. Of course, most PGCC students attend part time. Looking at the 231 Fall 1990 entrants who attended all four major terms full-time reveals a majority had earned at least 45 credits. Still, even among this group only nine students (four percent) had earned a degree.

An examination of the final grades of all courses taken by the 231 full-time students over the two year period is instructive. Three-fourths of all course enrollments ended in a passing grade and thus earned credit. Students withdrew from 10 percent of the courses. Five percent of the courses had been repeated and thus did not contribute toward credit accumulation. Four percent of the courses were failed. The remaining four percent reflected successful completion of developmental courses that do not award credit toward a degree.

Finally, most full-time students do not take sufficient courses each term to be on a pace to earn a degree in two years. The traditional full-time load of 15 hours has become a rarity. Less than a fifth of PGCC's full-timers take 15 or more credits a term. A full-time load is now defined as 12 hours or more, and most students take closer to 12 than 15 hours.

Transfer Preparation

Half of the credit students attending PGCC say their reason for attending is to prepare for transfer to a four-year college or university. How many students transfer each year? Where do they go, and how well do they do? Answers to such questions are basic to assessing the achievement of a major mission of the community college.

Transfer volume and destinations. Using statewide fall enrollment reporting systems, MHEC staff generate a report each year showing the fall-to-fall enrollment patterns of students among Maryland public colleges and universities. The resulting "transfer matrix" provides one indicator of transfer volume and destinations, by showing where

PGCC Transfers to Maryland Senior Colleges and Universities

	87-88	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92
UMCP	376	427	385	400	345
UMUC	272	267	274	235	225
Bowie State	98	110	139	129	147
UMBC	41	39	46	54	67
Towson State	70	43	71	65	50
Salisbury State	26	46	29	37	25
UMES	13	11	19	13	20
Morgan State	11	11	12	4	18
Frostburg State	15	14	23	23	12
St. Mary's	12	5	5	6	10
UMAB	8	8	9	16	9
U. of Baltimore	2	9	7	5	5
Coppin State	0	0	1	2	2
Total	**944**	**990**	**1,020**	**989**	**935**

Table 9

students enrolled at a particular campus one fall are enrolled the following fall. Students who transfer during a spring or summer session and do not continue in the fall are missed by this method, as are students who transfer to out-of-state or private institutions.

The MHEC transfer matrix identified 935 students enrolled at PGCC in Fall 1991 who were enrolled in Fall 1992 at a Maryland public four-year college or university. The most popular transfer destination was the University of Maryland at College Park (see Table 9). The 345 transfers to UMCP was the lowest total in a number of years. The number of transfers to the University of Maryland University College was also down. In contrast, Bowie State and the University of Maryland Baltimore County each had record high numbers of PGCC transfers.

Examining transfer from PGCC to four-year institutions is an appropriate measure for evaluating a key community college mission. But this exclusive one-way look misses much student movement, including substantial "reverse transfer" from senior institutions to the community college. In recent years, the number of students

Net Transfers, PGCC-Md. Four-Year Publics, Fall 1991 - Fall 1992

	From PGCC to Four-Year	From Four-Year to PGCC	Net Transfers
UMCP	345	159	186
UMUC	225	61	164
Bowie State	147	49	98
UMBC	67	17	50
Towson State	50	14	36
Salisbury State	25	6	19
St. Mary's	10	2	8
Morgan State	18	11	7
UMAB	9	2	7
UMES	20	15	5
U. of Baltimore	5	0	5
Coppin State	2	1	1
Frostburg State	12	14	(2)
Total	**935**	**351**	**584**

Table 10

transferring from senior institutions to PGCC has equalled nearly two-fifths of the total transferring from PGCC to senior institutions. The traffic flow varied by institution. The proportion accounted for by transfers from the senior institution to PGCC during 1991-92 was relatively high for the University of Maryland College Park, Morgan State University, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (see Table 10). The extreme case was Frostburg State University, where "reverse transfers" to PGCC outnumbered transfers from PGCC to Frostburg.

Transfer rates. Answering the question "what percentage of PGCC students transfer?" requires several definitional decisions. Do you report a rate for all students or only for those with transfer goals or enrolled in transfer curricula? Should a minimum number of hours be completed at PGCC? Methodological questions also arise. How long a period should elapse (i.e., transfer within three years of entry to the community college? Six years?)? Longitudinal studies utilizing student tracking systems designed for this purpose are usually preferable to surveys, but they require inter-institutional or state agency cooperation. Reliance on state systems means missing students who transfer out of state. Survey approaches can capture out-of-state transfer but are typically plagued by poor response rates and the resulting bias. Individual senior institutions may agree to provide grouped data, but information at the individual student record level is needed for thorough analysis. The choices made among these definitional and methodological options will usually yield different answers to the question "what is our transfer rate?"

Currently, a new Transfer Student System is being implemented in Maryland. The initial data collection from public senior institutions took place during Fall 1992. MHEC is expected to release merged data files to the community colleges in the latter part of 1993. These unit-record files should enable PGCC to conduct its most comprehensive analysis of transfer performance to date.

Prior to receipt of these new files, the best estimate of PGCC's transfer rate comes from MHEC analyses of full-time cohorts four years after community college entrance. For the most recent cohort for which data are available, students entering PGCC in Fall 1988, the in-state transfer rate to public institutions was 28 percent.

Analyses of survey data have found that PGCC transfer rates vary substantially by student subgroups defined by goals, programs of study, and other variables. For example, a spring 1988 survey of students who entered PGCC in Fall 1984 revealed an overall transfer rate of 27 percent. The rate for students completing at least 12 credits at PGCC was 36 percent. Students completing at least 12 hours and who had a transfer goal achieved a transfer rate of 65 percent. Seventy-nine percent of the students who had a transfer goal and graduated from PGCC had transferred within four years of their entry to PGCC.

Student performance at transfer institutions. As stated above, the Maryland Higher Education Commission has instituted a new state reporting system, the Transfer Student System or TSS, designed to provide community colleges with information about the performance of their transfers at four-year colleges and universities in the state. The initial data collection from public senior institutions has been completed, but MHEC had not released any TSS data as of this writing. For several years prior to the TSS collection, a number of University of Maryland campuses had provided limited, aggregated information directly to community colleges. For example, data were provided for 720 former PGCC students who had matriculated at nine University of Maryland campuses in 1990. A total of 519, or 72 percent, continued their studies in Spring 1991. Eighty-seven percent had cumulative grade point averages of 2.0 or above in their university courses. These data are reported by university campus in earlier reports available in the PGCC research office.

Student satisfaction with transfer preparation. Although most students who transfer do so without first completing a program at PGCC, the opinions of PGCC graduates who transfer provide valuable feedback since they reflect the experiences of those who have completed the entire PGCC curriculum. Graduates have, as a whole, reported satisfaction with their preparation for transfer. Eighty-five percent of the FY92 graduates indicated that their preparation for further study had been good or very good (see Table 11). Only three percent were dissatisfied with their PGCC background. High levels of satisfaction have been reported consistently over the years.

Graduates' Ratings of Preparation for Transfer
Percent of Survey Respondents

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Very Good	42%	36%	32%	35%	36%
Good	38	46	51	44	49
Fair	16	15	13	17	13
Poor	3	3	2	2	2
Very Poor	1	1	2	2	1
Total Respondents (100%)	**167**	**183**	**188**	**176**	**201**

Table 11

Employment Preparation

A quarter of the College's credit students attend PGCC to prepare for entry into a new career or to update job skills. Students with job-related goals are more likely than other students to complete their PGCC programs. A year after their PGCC graduation, what proportion are working full-time? How successful are these graduates in finding employment related to their community college curricula?

Graduate employment. Two-thirds of the students graduating from PGCC during the 1991-92 academic year were employed in full-time jobs when surveyed during spring 1993. Another 20 percent were working part-time. Most of the part-time workers were continuing their education (see Table 12). Five percent were unemployed and not attending college.

Status of FY92 Graduates One Year After Graduation
(N = 419)

	Continuing College		Not	
	Full-time	Part-time	Continuing	Totals
Employed full-time	4%	14%	48%	66%
Employed part-time	10%	3%	7%	20%
Unemployed	7%	2%	5%	14%
Totals	**21%**	**19%**	**60%**	**100%**

Table 12

A plurality of the employed respondents (39 percent) were working in their current jobs before attending PGCC. Twenty-six percent obtained their jobs while attending the College. The remaining 35 percent got their jobs after graduating from PGCC. Regardless of when they started in their positions, 72 percent rated their PGCC job preparation as good or very good. Another quarter gave a fair rating. The remaining three percent said their PGCC studies had been a poor or very poor preparation for the world of work.

Health technology graduates were most likely to be working in jobs related to their PGCC program (see Table 13). Consistently over the years, nine out of ten graduates of nursing and allied health curricula have found related jobs. Among the most recent graduates, those completing programs in marketing management, early childhood education, and criminal justice had the lowest levels of related employment.

Related Employment Rates of Career Program Graduates by Selected Program Areas

	FY89	FY90	FY91	FY92
Nursing	94% (35)	97% (33)	98% (47)	95% (42)
Allied Health	100% (17)	83% (12)	100% (21)	91% (33)
Accounting	65% (20)	79% (24)	56% (18)	86% (21)
Electronics/Comp. Service	60% (10)	67% (9)	73% (11)	73% (11)
Paralegal	53% (30)	50% (30)	46% (35)	63% (19)
Computer/Info.Systems	56% (36)	72% (32)	61% (28)	58% (31)
Business Management	47% (75)	74% (73)	55% (67)	57% (70)
Criminal Justice	69% (16)	43% (7)	55% (11)	50% (18)
Early Childhood Ed.	86% (7)	50% (4)	50% (10)	50% (8)
Marketing Management	50% (10)	57% (14)	40% (5)	40% (5)

Table 13

Graduates working in jobs unrelated to their PGCC program cited an assortment of reasons. The most common reason, cited by 22 percent of the FY92 survey respondents, was that they could not find a job in their field. Eighteen percent said their current job offered better pay or more opportunity for advancement. Seven percent decided that they did not want to work in a job related to their PGCC program.

Employer evaluations of PGCC graduates. Biennial surveys of employers of PGCC graduates have been conducted by the research office since the mid-1970s. The surveys, administered as the second component of the statewide graduate follow-up, ask supervisors to rate the overall job performance and specific job skills of PGCC graduates, and to suggest improvements to community college programs that would enhance the capabilities of PGCC graduates. Only employers of graduates working in positions related to their PGCC program are surveyed.

The most recent employer survey was conducted in the spring of 1993. Questionnaires were mailed to 112 supervisors of graduates from the 1992 graduating class who provided employer information and consented to the survey. This last methodological requirement could have introduced bias into the survey, so findings must be interpreted with caution. The small sample also suggests limitations to generalization, although the consistency of the findings over the years mitigates this concern. A total of 81 employers responded to the 1993 survey, for a response rate of 72 percent.

The employers who respond to the College's surveys have given high ratings on all survey items in all years the surveys have been conducted. Mean ratings of specific job skills in the most recent survey ranged from 4.24 to 4.59 on a five-point scale. Employers have given the graduates the highest ratings for their ability to learn on the job. The lowest rated skill over the years has usually been writing, but this is only a relative deficiency as average ratings of graduate writing abilities have always been above four on the five-point scale.

Employer ratings were analyzed by the graduates' degree program. Nursing was the only program where specific job skill average ratings fell below 4.0; PGCC nurses received mean ratings of 3.9 on technical job skills, familiarity with equipment required by the job, and problem solving ability. Graduates from allied health programs and criminal justice and paralegal curricula generally received the highest ratings across the nine specific job skills evaluated.

In addition to the ratings of specific skills, employers provided a summary rating of the graduates' overall preparation for employment. These judgments mirrored the evaluations of specific jobs skills; scale means were above 4.0 for all program areas, with nursing lowest at 4.2 and criminal justice/paralegal highest at 4.8. Two survey items captured perhaps the "bottom line" judgments: Would you hire another graduate from this program? and Would you recommend that other employers hire graduates of this program? Most employers said yes to both questions, indicating they would be "likely" or "highly likely" to do so. Approximately one in seven respondents was less positive, checking the more neutral "perhaps" response. These neutral evaluations were fairly evenly spread throughout all program areas, suggesting individual rather than systematic, curriculum-related problems.

Licensure examination performance. Graduates of PGCC's health technology programs typically sit for licensure and certification examinations within a few months of graduation. The conventional measure used for program evaluation is the pass rate (number passing divided by number tested) of first-time examinees on the entry level examination. Graduates of the College's program in respiratory therapy have generally done very well on their examinations; in three of the past five years, all PGCC graduates taking the test have passed (see Table 14).

Pass Rates of PGCC Graduates on Certification Exams
First-time Candidates

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Medical Records	50% (6)	88% (8)	75% (8)	44% (9)	67% (6)
Nuclear Medicine	100% (6)	100% (4)	80% (5)	80% (10)	78% (9)
Nursing	78% (74)	77% (68)	83% (72)	89% (74)	90% (77)
Radiography	70% (10)	100% (10)	88% (8)	73% (15)	81% (21)
Respiratory Therapy	100% (6)	78% (9)	100% (7)	100% (4)	93% (15)

Table 14

The College had been concerned about the performance of its nursing graduates on the NCLEX-RN examination. As a group, PGCC's graduates had achieved pass rates below the Maryland and national averages. However, recent changes, such as new teaching techniques and student support services, appear to be having a beneficial impact. The pass rate on the NCLEX-RN has increased for three consecutive years, reaching 90 percent in 1992. The statewide pass rate for first-time candidates on the NCLEX-RN in 1992 was 93 percent.

Examination pass rates in radiography and nuclear medicine have varied over the past five years. In some years, all PGCC graduates taking the tests have passed. In other years, as few as 70 percent have passed. Approximately four-fifths of the 1992 graduates of these two programs passed their respective examinations.

Four of the six medical records graduates from 1992 passed their certification examination. Less than half had passed the year before. As a group, medical records graduates have generally had more difficulty with their tests than graduates of other health technology programs at PGCC.

General Education

Prince George's Community College believes all degree-seeking students should be able to communicate effectively, think critically, understand and interpret numerical data, understand the scientific method, appreciate cultural diversity, and value the fine and performing arts. The College attempts to ensure that all degree-seeking students meet these general education goals by requiring students to earn a minimum number of credit hours in specified subject areas. In lieu of expensive evaluation procedures such as standardized testing, portfolio assessment, or personal interviews, the College relies on the individual assessments of its graduates as to the level of achievement of its general education mission. Graduates are asked in the annual follow-up survey to rate the extent to which PGCC attendance helped them achieve ten goals of the general education program. The response pattern has been consistent over the six years the question has been asked. Graduates report that their experiences at PGCC increased their enjoyment of learning, enhanced their self confidence, and clarified their educational or career goals (see Table 15). Graduates as a group have indicated that their PGCC attendance helped them more than a fair amount in developing their writing skills and their understanding of science and technology. The College has been less successful in imparting knowledge of other cultures and appreciation of the fine arts.

Achievement of General Education Objectives
Graduates' Self-reported Ratings, Five-Point Scale

	FY89 (N = 412)	FY90 (N = 376)	FY91 (N = 395)	FY92 (N = 386)
Enjoyment of learning	3.94	3.97	3.93	3.91
Self confidence	3.85	3.87	3.93	3.89
Goal clarification	3.77	3.87	3.76	3.88
Writing improvement	3.46	3.52	3.51	3.47
Science understanding	3.19	3.24	3.37	3.42
Reading comprehension	3.31	3.28	3.45	3.30
Mathematics improvement	3.15	3.24	3.20	3.20
Attentiveness to news	3.18	3.04	3.18	3.19
Knowledge of other cultures	3.09	2.92	3.07	2.94
Appreciation of fine arts	2.74	2.64	2.82	2.73

Table 15

Remedial Education

A majority of students entering PGCC in recent years has needed remediation in one or more basic academic skills, according to placement test score cutoffs established by the College. However, the College does not have a collegewide policy requiring students to complete remediation before enrolling in credit courses. Instead, departments and divisions may establish individual course prerequisites based on placement test scores or completion of developmental courses. To meet a specific course prerequisite, students may take only part of the placement test rather than the entire examination. (Most, however, do take the test in all three areas of reading, English composition, and mathematics.) Students are placed in different levels of developmental courses based on their test scores and individual counseling, and may make progress during a semester without completing all of the remediation necessary to meet credit course prerequisites. Students with severe learning deficits may take developmental courses in an area for two or more semesters before they are prepared for credit classes.

Earlier reports have examined the need for remediation and the developmental course enrollment and progress of all students entering in a given fall term. Because PGCC is increasingly involved with the Prince George's County public school system in efforts to improve student learning, this report will focus on the developmental needs of County high school graduates. Two-thirds of the first-time students taking the College's placement test each year are graduates of Prince George's County public schools.

Remedial Needs of June 1992 Graduates of Prince George's County Public High Schools Entering PGCC in Fall 1992

Tested in All 3 Areas

Tested in all 3 areas	926	100%
No remediation needed	296	32%
Remediation needed	630	68%
In one area	254	27%
In two areas	161	17%
In three areas	215	23%

Table 16

A total of 926 students who graduated from County high schools in June 1992 completed the placement test in all three areas in conjunction with their entrance to PGCC in Fall 1992. Two-thirds of these students needed remediation in at least one area (see Table 16). Nearly a quarter of the students tested needed remediation in all three areas.

The proportion of County high school graduates coming to PGCC who need developmental courses has increased from 56 percent in Fall 1988 to 68 percent in Fall 1992 (see Table 17).

Percent of Prince George's County Public High School Graduates Entering PGCC Each Fall Needing at Least One Developmental Course

	Total Tested in All Three Areas	Needed Remediation Number	Percent
1992	926	630	68%
1991	908	602	66%
1990	1,037	590	57%
1989	1,033	607	59%
1988	1,116	624	56%

Table 17

Mathematics is the skill area with the largest percentage of students needing remediation. Indeed, a majority of the County high school graduates coming to PGCC need developmental mathematics (see Table 18). Approximately two-fifths of the entering students from the public schools need remediation in reading; a similar proportion needs developmental English.

Student Evaluation of Teaching

Student evaluation of teaching is a key component of the College's Faculty Professional Growth and Development Plan. Full-time faculty are evaluated by a full-scale evaluation procedure every year for the first five years. Tenured faculty and faculty on annual contracts who have served five years are evaluated every three years of service unless a special evaluation is requested. Full-time faculty who exceed

Remedial Needs of June 1992 Graduates of
Prince George's County Public High Schools
Entering PGCC in Fall 1992

By Skill Area

Skill Area Assessed	Total Students Tested	Identified as Needing Remediation	Percent
Mathematics	957	514	54%
Reading	944	367	39%
English	941	359	38%

Table 18

established threshold scores on their previous evaluation may opt for a shorter, more focused package for their periodic evaluation. Evaluation by students is part of the smaller package.

In 1992-93, adjunct faculty evaluation procedures were changed. Adjunct faculty now are evaluated during their first two semesters of service and every alternate semester thereafter until they have taught 24 credit hours. Adjunct faculty who have taught 24 or more hours and whose most recent student evaluations are 4.0 or above may, at the discretion of their immediate supervisor, be evaluated every sixth semester of service or every third year, whichever comes first. This change in procedure is reflected in the reduced number of faculty evaluated in 1992-93.

In 1992-93, student evaluations were conducted for 235 teaching faculty. The mean response across all items was 4.3 on a five-point scale. Fifty-four teachers, or 23 percent of those evaluated, received average student evaluation scores below 4.0. Full-time faculty scoring in this group must, because of their student evaluations, undergo the full-scale evaluation process the next time. Specific student complaints or below-par ratings on certain evaluation items may trigger a conference with instructional administrators which may lead to various faculty remediation activities.

The College is committed to supporting its faculty in their teaching mission. An example is the Faculty Mentor Program, providing teachers with confidential counseling and assistance from designated master teachers to improve their classroom techniques.

External Evaluation

Six instructional programs at the College are individually accredited: Electronics Engineering Technology, Nursing, and four allied health programs. The Electronics Engineering Technology program is accredited through 1996 by the Technology Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (TAC/ABET). In addition, during the past year the Electronics Engineering Technology program received a letter of understanding from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) allowing PGCC graduates to bypass the FAA's new hire electronics training sequence. PGCC is one of only nine postsecondary schools in the nation to have their electronics training so recognized.

Based on a joint site visit in April 1992, the Nursing program is accredited through 1995 by the Maryland Board of Nursing and through 2000 by the National League of Nursing. The allied health programs are accredited by the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation (CAHEA) of the American Medical Association. The Nuclear Medicine program is accredited through 1996. The Radiography program had its site visit in May 1993 and is currently awaiting its reaccreditation notification. Site visits are scheduled in the spring of 1994 for both Respiratory Therapy and Medical Records.

Summary

This report has presented highlights of numerous studies of student outcomes conducted by the College's Office of Institutional Research and Analysis. Relatively low rates of graduation and transfer have been documented. Yet most PGCC students express satisfaction with their community college experiences. Several specific satisfaction indices, such as ratings of transfer preparation, have been included in the above analyses of outcomes. Follow-up surveys include two questions that attempt to measure overall happiness with PGCC. When asked, "if you had to do it over again, would you attend this community college?", nine of ten FY92 graduates said yes. Seven percent were not sure, with the remaining three percent indicating they would not have come to PGCC. When asked if they would enroll in the same program, 78 percent said yes. Twelve percent said they were not sure. One in ten of the FY92 graduates indicated they would probably not enroll in the same program. Surveys of students who have discontinued their studies at PGCC have also found general satisfaction with the College. Overwhelmingly, students stop their studies for reasons unrelated to their experiences at the College. Changes in job and family situations, moving out of the County, and other personal circumstances prompt students to discontinue their studies at the College, not unhappiness with PGCC.

Reconciling low rates of achievement of the traditional measures of student success with high rates of student satisfaction leads to an examination of alternative

student goals in attending the College. Many students have their educational needs met without having to complete a curriculum at the College. Yet this is not the complete answer, as many who do aspire to degree completion or successful transfer do not achieve their goals. Among this group are those who come to the College with poor academic backgrounds. Through its open admissions policy, PGCC has given them the opportunity to try college. Some in this group overcome great obstacles to succeed; others do not. However, even those not securing the traditional achievements of degrees or transfer may benefit from PGCC attendance. Helping people to read, write, or compute more effectively, clarifying their goals or enhancing their self confidence--these can be significant accomplishments.

Attempting to summarize the wide variety of assessment findings compiled in this report is problematic. However, given PGCC's open admissions policy, the high percentage of entering students needing remediation, and the College's commitment to maintaining academic standards, it appears that the student learning outcomes for which data are available are reasonable.

Selected Institutional Research Bibliography

For readability and brevity, many details, including discussions of methodologies and sources, have been omitted from the above summaries of student outcomes data. The Office of Institutional Research and Analysis has published 85 reports over the past eight years examining student academic performance and learning outcomes. These reports are available from the research office for those desiring more information than provided in this summary report. Selected titles are listed below (by report number) to illustrate the range of reports available.

RB94-4 *Reading Placement Exam Scores and Course Grading Outcomes*
(K. Boughan, July 1993, 15 pages)

RB94-2 *Student Right-to-Know Completion Rates*
(C. Clagett, July 1993, 22 pages)

BT93-3 *Annual Assessment Report*
(C. Clagett, November 1992, 31 pages)

EA93-3 *Course Pass Rates in Fall 1992*
(P. Diehl, February 1993, 22 pages)

RB91-9 *Graduate Employment: An Update*
(K. Boughan, May 1991, 27 pages)

EA91-11 *An Analysis of Developmental Students in Fall 1990*
(K. McCoy, April 1991, 23 pages)

RB90-11 *PGCC Transfers to Maryland Four-year Institutions*
(C. Clagett & R. Huntington, June 1990, 21 pages)

PE90-5 *Nursing Program Students and Academic Outcomes*
(K. Boughan, March 1990, 56 pages)

BT89-2 *Student Outcomes Performance Accountability Report*
(C. Clagett, November 1988, 84 pages)